



STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 8, Section 1

For use with textbook pages 193–198.

The Land

Terms to Know

cordillera A mountain range that runs parallel to another mountain range (page 194)

altiplano A high plain (page 194)

escarpment A steep cliff or slope (page 196)

llanos Grassy plains of Colombia and Venezuela (page 196)

pampas Grassy plains of Argentina and Uruguay (page 196)

gaucho A cowhand on the pampas (page 197)

hydroelectric power Electricity generated from the energy of water (page 197)

estuary An area where the tide meets a river current (page 197)

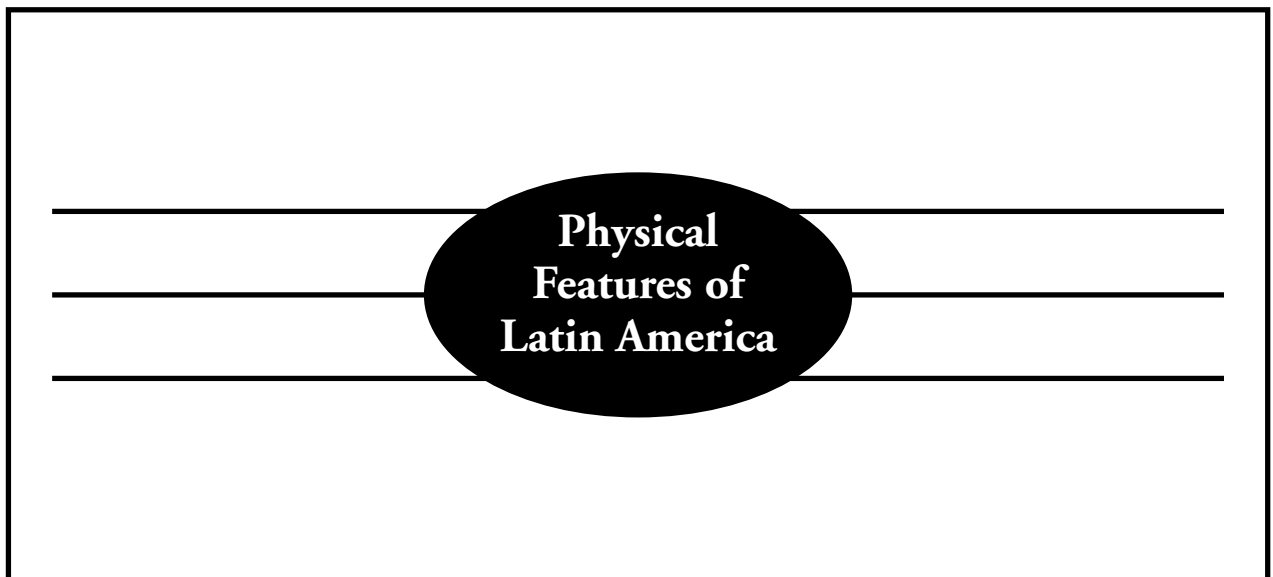
DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

What comes to mind when you hear about the Andes Mountains or the Amazon River? In what region are these physical features located? Why are these physical features well known?

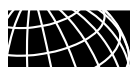
This section focuses on the landforms and natural resources of Latin America.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the diagram below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the physical features that make up Latin America.



(continued)

**STUDY GUIDE****Chapter 8, Section 1****READ TO LEARN** **Introduction** (page 193)

The Amazon River is the world's second longest river. Other important features of Latin America include mountains, islands, coastal lowlands, plains, and waterways.

1. Why is the Amazon River an important feature of Latin America?

 **A Vast Region** (page 193)

Latin America is in the Western Hemisphere, south of the United States. The region was settled by Europeans who spoke Spanish or Portuguese. These languages are based on Latin, which is why the region is called Latin America.

Latin America is often divided into three areas:

- A. Middle America** includes Mexico and seven countries in **Central America**.
 - B. The Caribbean** consists of island countries in the Caribbean Sea.
 - C. South America** is a continent, the largest land area of Latin America, and has 13 countries.
2. Into what areas is Latin America often divided?

 **Mountains and Plateaus** (page 194)

Mountains extend the entire length of Latin America. The rugged landscape of Latin America is caused by its location along the Pacific Ring of Fire. This is where plates of the earth's crust have collided for thousands of years, creating mountains, volcanoes, and earthquakes. Many people live in the mountains for the cool climate and natural resources.

The mountains of Latin America change names as you move south:

- A. The Sierra Madre** are in Mexico.
- B. The Central Highlands** are a chain of volcanic mountains in Central America. Many Caribbean islands are part of this range.

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STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 8, Section 1

- C. The **Andes** of South America are the world's longest mountain ranges. They consist of **cordilleras**, or ranges that run parallel to each other. The peaks in Peru and Bolivia encircle the **altiplano**, or high plain.

There are four important plateaus in Latin America:

- A. **Patagonia** is a long plateau in Argentina.
- B. The **Mexican Plateau** has a mild climate, fertile soil, and plentiful rainfall. The living conditions have attracted settlers for thousands of years.
- D. The **Mato Grosso Plateau** covers much of central Brazil.
- E. The **Brazilian Highlands** is a vast plateau in Brazil. Its eastern edge forms an **escarpment**, or a steep cliff or slope, that plunges sharply to the Atlantic Ocean.

3. What has caused the rugged landscape of Latin America?

Lowlands and Plains (page 196)

Narrow lowland areas lie along most coasts of Latin America. Inland areas of South America have large grasslands. The **llanos** are vast grassy plains of Colombia and Venezuela. The **pampas** are grassy, treeless plains in Argentina and Uruguay. Cowhands called llaneros in the llanos and **gau-chos** in the pampas drive herds of cattle across the plains. The pampas have fertile soil. Many crops are grown there.

4. Where are the lowlands and plains of Latin America located?

Water Systems (page 197)

Latin America's waterways are used for transportation. The Rio Grande forms part of the border between Mexico and the United States. The Amazon River and smaller rivers that join it form the Amazon Basin of South America. Another river system is formed by the Paraná, Paraguay, and Uruguay Rivers. It provides **hydroelectric power**, or electricity generated from the energy of water. These rivers flow into an estuary, an area where the tide meets a river current, called the Río de la Plata.

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**STUDY GUIDE****Chapter 8, Section 1**

5. What do the water systems of Latin America provide the people of the region?

 **Natural Resources** (page 198)

Latin America's natural resources include minerals, forests, farmland, and water. Its important minerals are oil, natural gas, gold, silver, emeralds, copper, bauxite, and tin.

6. What important natural resources are found in Latin America?



STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 8, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 199–203.

Climate and Vegetation

Terms to Know

canopy A continuous layer of leaves (page 200)

tierra caliente Hot land (page 203)

tierra templada Temperate land (page 203)

tierra fría Cold land (page 203)

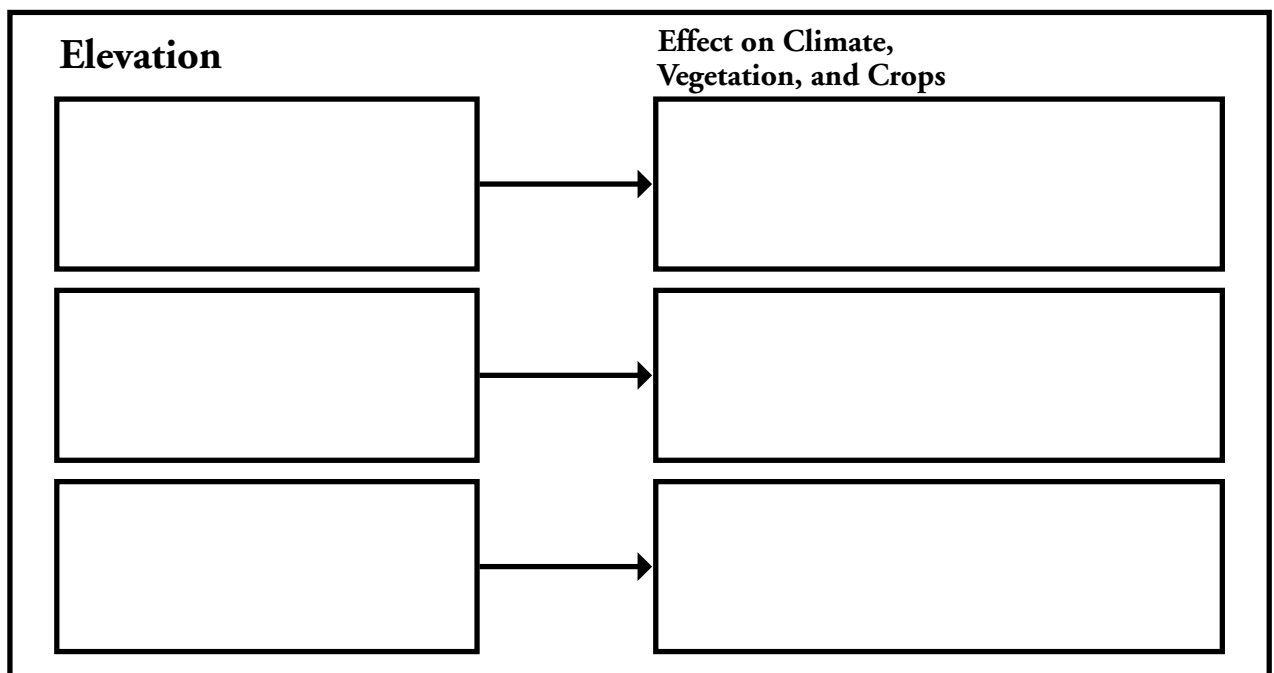
DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Does the slogan, “Save the rain forests,” sound familiar to you? What does this slogan mean? How can you help save the rain forests? Why are rain forests important?

In the last section, you read about the kinds of landforms and natural resources found in Latin America. This section focuses on the types of climate regions and vegetation found in Latin America.

ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the cause-and-effect diagram below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about how elevation affects the climate, vegetation, and crops in Latin America.



(continued)

**STUDY GUIDE****Chapter 8, Section 2****READ TO LEARN****Introduction** (page 199)

Latin America has many climate regions. The climates and landforms affect the kinds of plants, trees, and crops that grow there.

1. What affects the kinds of plants, trees, and crops that grow in Latin America?

Climate and Vegetation Regions (page 199)

Much of Latin America lies between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn. Therefore, large areas of Latin America have some type of tropical climate with lush vegetation. The mountains and wind patterns, however, create a variety of climates and natural vegetation in the region. There are five major climate regions in Latin America:

- A. A tropical rain forest** climate has hot temperatures and large amounts of rainfall year-round. This climate is found in southern Mexico, eastern Central America, some Caribbean islands, and parts of northern South America. A variety of trees grow in the rain forest, including tropical hardwoods, palms, tree ferns, and bamboo. Trees grow so close together that they form a continuous layer of leaves called a **canopy**. The Amazon Basin—the earth’s largest rain forest—has more types of plants and animals than anywhere else on Earth.
- B. A tropical savanna** climate has hot temperatures, large amounts of rainfall and a long dry season. This climate is found in southwestern Mexico, most Caribbean islands, and north central South America. Many tropical savanna areas have vast grasslands.
- C. A humid subtropical** climate has short, mild winters and long, hot, humid summers. This climate is found over much of southeastern South America. The **pampas** of this region are covered with short grasses. Farmers plant crops in this region to hold the topsoil in place.
- D. A desert** climate is dry year-round. This climate is found in parts of northern Mexico, coastal Peru, Argentina, and Chile. There is little vegetation in this climate region, but prickly cacti and drought-resistant plants have adapted to the harsh environment.
- E. A steppe** climate has hot summers, cool winters, and light rainfall. The vegetation is grassy or lightly forested. This climate is found in northern Mexico, northeastern Brazil, and south central South America.

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2. What are the five major climate regions in Latin America?

 **Elevation and Climate** (page 202)

The climates of Latin America are more affected by elevation than by latitude. Spanish terms are used to describe three different vertical climate zones that occur as elevation increases:

- A. **Tierra caliente**, or hot land, is at the lowest elevations between sea level and 2,500 feet (760 m). Average temperatures range from 68° to 91° (20° to 33°C). Vegetation is rain forest, and crops include bananas, sugar, rice, and cacao.
 - B. **Tierra templada**, or temperate land, lies between 2,500 and 6,500 feet (760 and 2,000 m). Temperatures range from 60° to 72° F (16° to 22° C). Vegetation includes broad-leafed and coniferous evergreens. Crops include coffee and corn. More people live in this vertical climate zone than the other two because of the mild climate.
 - C. **Tierra fría**, or cold land, lies between 6,500 and 10,000 feet (2,000 and 3,048 m). Frosts are common during winter. Potatoes and barley grow well there.
3. How does elevation affect climate and vegetation in Latin America?
